

# Honoring American Seafarers During National Maritime Day 2006 Ceremonies in New York City

By Bill McDonald, North Atlantic Region

MARAD's North Atlantic Region Office coordinated and participated in National Maritime Day 2006 activities in the Port of New York and New Jersey on May 22, 2006. Region Director Bob McKeon and Maritime Program Specialist Bill McDonald joined The Rev. Dr. Jean R. Smith, Executive Director of The Seamen's Church Institute of New York & New Jersey, senior members of The Port Authority of NY & NJ, U.S. Coast Guard Captain of the Port of New York Glenn Wilkshire and more than 160 World War II merchant marine veterans, family members and industry leaders for the day's events, which began with a memorial service at historic Trinity Church in Lower Manhattan honoring the 9,000 U.S. merchant mariners who lost their lives in World War II.



**(Left to right) MARAD's North Atlantic Region Director Bob McKeon; Maritime Program Specialist Bill McDonald; The Rev. Dr. Jean R. Smith, Executive Director of The Seamen's Church Institute of New York & New Jersey; and U.S. Coast Guard Captain of the Port of New York Glenn Wilkshire during National Maritime Day 2006 events in New York City.**

Among those addressing the service were Capt. Glenn Wilkshire and George E. Goldman, President of the Dennis Roland Chapter of the American Merchant Marine Veterans, who stated, "We are here to pay tribute to those who gave their lives to build the bridge of ships that sustained allied forces during World War II. May the deep sea where they now sleep rock them gently until the end of time." Following the service, the group proceeded to the seawall in Battery Park in Lower Manhattan for a lost seafarers wreath laying ceremony at The

American Merchant Mariners Memorial, followed by a luncheon with World War II music playing at the Seamen's Church Institute.

Luncheon speakers included Bob McKeon, who praised the heroism and sacrifices of World War II seafarers and introduced Dean Steele, President of the Port of New York Chapter of the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy Alumni Foundation. Mr. Steele spoke with respect to a campaign called "Tell America," which relates the significance of the U.S. merchant marine to the lives of all Americans. The luncheon remarks were followed by a showing of the DVD presentation "U.S. Merchant Marine: Serving America in Peace and War," which supports the aims of "Tell America."

At the conclusion of the day's activities, Messrs. McKeon and McDonald distributed copies of the DVD presentation to participants, together with the President's Proclamation, a National Maritime Day 2006 Power Point presentation prepared by MARAD Headquarters personnel, an article on the creation of containerization and information on the "Tell America" campaign.



*(Photos courtesy of The Seamen's Church Institute of New York & New Jersey)*

**The lost seafarers wreath laying ceremony at The American Merchant Mariners Memorial on National Maritime Day 2006.**